

USE YOUR MEDICATIONS WISELY

Arizona Department of Corrections
Health Service Bureau

Inmate Wellness Program
HEP 1046- 01/06

Problems may happen when a patient is taking many medications.

These problems are sometimes overlooked because they can be confused with the normal aging process. This sometimes results in still more drugs being given to treat the new problems.

Common Problems

Some of the most common problems include:

- \$ being tired or less alert
- \$ confusion (some or all of the time)
- \$ weakness
- \$ poor balance or feeling dizzy
- \$ falling down
- \$ depression or lack of interest
- \$ anxiety or restlessness
- \$ loss of appetite
- \$ tremors/shaking
- \$ seeing or hearing things (hallucinations)
- \$ decreased sexual desire
- \$ high blood pressure



These problems may be due to side effects of drugs, caused by reactions between drugs or by taking medications ordered for another person.

Who is at Risk?

You are at greater risk if you are taking many medications. This increases the possibility for serious drug reactions.

Prevention

- \$ Never assume that a problem is just a sign of getting old. Talk to a health care professional.
- \$ Work with your health care staff to make your treatment plan simple, like taking different medications once a day.
- \$ Over-the-counter drugs and vitamins are drugs and should be treated as such. Always tell the health care staff what medicines or vitamins you are taking.
- \$ Learn your medicines by name and what they are for.
- \$ Always read the labels on your medicine and follow the directions. If you have trouble reading or understanding the directions, ask for help from a health care professional.
- \$ Take medicine in the exact amount and at the same time as explained by your doctor.
- \$ Do not stop taking a medication unless your doctor says that it is okay. Even if you are feeling better.
- \$ Taking more or less of a drug does not help.
- \$ Do not take drugs prescribed for another person or give yours to someone else.
- \$ If you have a problem with forgetting to take your medicine, ask for help.

Take care of your health!

